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TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND
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INTERIOR AND INSULAR
AFFAIRS
COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND
COOPERATION IN EUROPE

January 27, 1992

Commissioner Ivan Selin
Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Chairman Selin:

We are writing to you regarding the Request for Action by the Nuclear Control Institute and the Committee to Bridge the Gap. The Director of the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation rejected their request that the Commission institute an Individual Plant Examination (IPE) program requiring licensees to evaluate the margin of their plants to withstand events beyond the current design basis.

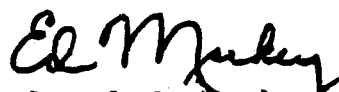
In an increasingly fragmented world, it is imprudent to downplay the possibility and the potential consequences of a terrorist attack on a nuclear power plant. A story on Middle East terrorism in Monday's Wall Street Journal wisely observed that "it would be foolish to conclude flatly that the potential for terrorism is fading. Today's rosy forecast can easily be followed by tomorrow's unpredicted terrorist spectacular." Nothing would be more spectacular than sabotage of a nuclear power plant.

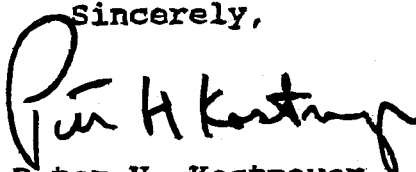
Therefore, we are most concerned by the Director's conclusions that "conducting evaluations using more extensive threat characteristics would not provide useful information on the design of safety systems" [DD-91-08, p. 9] and that "the Petition does not present any information or identify any issues that the Commission has not already considered and addressed in previous policy decisions and rulemaking." [p. 11]

On the contrary, we believe that the petitioners' proposal is eminently sensible. It raises a threat that could have calamitous consequences and suggests an approach to reduce it that would not be onerous or costly. Indeed, considering the increase in plant safety and safeguards that could result from this approach, we urge you to use your authority under 10 CFR 2.206 (c) to review and reverse the staff decision.

Thank you for your consideration in this important matter.

Sincerely,


Edward J. Markey
Member of Congress


Peter H. Kostmayer
Member of Congress


Sam Geidenson
Member of Congress